

**Special Education Advisory Panel Meeting Minutes**  
**Comfort Suites of Helena**  
**May 7-8, 2015**

Members in Attendance: Doug Dellwo, Courtney Bell, Peter Halloran, Sindie Kennedy, Christine Whitlatch, Kellie Ann Hicks, Dan Laughlin, Barbara Varnum

Excused Members: Tessie Rose Bailey; Dave Marzolf, Tristin Scott, Harold Olson, Theresa Becker, Marvin Williams, Wendy Studt, Theresa Becker

Non-Members in Attendance: Dick Trerise, Frank Podobnik, Anne Rainey, Marlene Wallis, Norm Ames (TAESE)

**Thursday, May 7, 2015**

The Panel members attended the Annual Joint CSPD Partnership Meeting, held at the Colonial Inn Red Lion. Stakeholders in special education gathered to network, collaborate and provide suggestions/advice regarding Phase 2 of the State Systemic Improvement Plan.

John Copenhaver, from the Center for Technical Assistance Excellence in Special Education, facilitated the meeting.

- Navigating the Ever-Changing Landscape of Special Education: Issues and Resources
- Honoring Partners' Work to Increase Results for Infants, Toddlers, Children and Youth with Disabilities Through a Cradle to College/Career Framework—Follow-up from the 2014 CSPD Annual Meeting
- Moving on to Phase 2:
  - Examining the infrastructure
  - Supporting local implementation
  - Developing a plan to evaluate

Montana Stakeholder Input on Phase 2 of the SSIP  
Targeted Area: School Completion

Small Group Discussions

- Infrastructure changes
- Supporting local implementation
- Evaluation process
- CSPD partners' involvement

Frank Podobnik, Montana Special Education Director, presented on the Title I Equity Plan and the Impact of CSPD.

Dick Trerise, Montana Part B Manager and Norm Ames, TAESE, presented The Montana State Systemic Improvement Plan: a Review of Phase I and the Impact of Stakeholders.

Wendy Studt, Part C Coordinator, Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services, presented The Montana Part C State Systemic Improvement Plan: An overview of Phase I and Preview of Phase 2.

The Partnership Meeting concluded with: Final Thoughts, Reflections and Comments.

### **Friday, May 8, 2015**

Chairperson Doug Dellwo called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. The Panel members, OPI staff and visitors introduced themselves.

Following review of the Proposed Agenda, Barbara Varnum moved to accept the Proposed Agenda, Christine Whitlatch seconded the motion and the motion passed. The Proposed Agenda was accepted as written.

The Panel reviewed the minutes of the January 22-23, 2015, meeting. Dan Laughlin moved to accept the minutes, Peter Halloran seconded the motion and the motion passed. The minutes of the January 22-23, 2015, meeting were approved as written.

### **Call for Public Comments**

A written comment was distributed to the Panel members, "Public Comment on Montana's Application for Part B Funds, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Fiscal Year 2015."

### **Division Report**

Frank reminded the Panel members that Mandi Gibbs is the Early Assistance Program Director, and does Suspension/Expulsion, Parent/School Inquiries Prior to Formal Complaint, Early Assistance Program (EAP), and Section 504 Questions.

Frank discussed the process for submitting the application for IDEA Part B funds and that rule changes have to come before the Panel for their input.

### **OPI Report (Legislature)**

Steve York, Assistant Superintendent, presented the Legislative Report. The complete report at this time is a part of these minutes. Following are some of the "It Is Law:"

HB 2 - The funding bill was on the way to the Governor (it did not include Special Education inflationary)

HB 284 – Bullying Bill (every case is unique)

HB 356 – Increase state CTE support (Montana is far behind other states)

HB 382 – Changes mental defect to mental disorder in Montana law

SB 65 – Changes GED references in law to High School Equivalency

SB 128 – School funding study bill

SB 213 – School Safety

SB 255 – Advancing Ag Ed flexibility bill

SB 345 – Revise adoption of accreditation standards.

#### Bill Failures of Interest

SB 12 and HB 451 – Funding for 19 year old students

SB 14 – Raise the legal dropout age to 18

HB 377 – Halt implementation of the Montana Core Standards

HB 501 – Parental permission for any and all student record keeping

HB 596 – Charter Schools

#### Revisit Thursday Joint Meeting—Discussion

Suggestions:

- Have more parent representatives

- Place a variety of representatives at each group

- Have table tents for identification and group represented

It was noted that good things were developed from the activities.

#### Preview of June 25, 2015, Meeting

Election of officers for 2015-2016

#### Preview of September 17-18, 2015, Meeting

Panel Orientation

#### Adjourn

Dan Laughlin moved to adjourn the meeting, Sindie Kennedy seconded the motion and the motion passed. The meeting adjourned at noon.